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## MARRYING A CONVICT.

I had served twenty-five years on board an East Indian ship, and for the last ten years had commanded the *Belle*, one of the finest craft that ever floated. I was an old sea dog, and had dwelt so long on salt water that I felt almost a hatred for the land.

On the 20th of October, 1824, I received orders to put myself in readiness to sail for Cayenne. I was to transport twenty-five soldiers and a convict. I had no objection to the individual with me, and the letter I received from the military commandant, with a large red seal, which I was not to open until between 27 and 28 degrees West longitude; that is, just before we were about to cross the line.

The letter was a long packet, so well sealed on every side that it was impossible to catch the slightest glimpse of its contents. I am not naturally superstitious, but there was something in the look of the letter that I did not altogether like, though I could give no reason why. However, I carried it into the cabin, and stuck it under the glass of a little chabby English clock, which was fastened above my head. I was busy fixing the letter under the clock, when who should come into my cabin but the convict and his wife! This was the first time I had seen either of them, and I may say that a more prepossessing couple I never met.

The woman was scarcely more than fifteen, and a handsome as a picture; while the husband was an intelligent, magnificently formed man, on whose features nature had never written "villain."

His crime, to be plain, was the misfortune of being a hundred years ahead of his age. He and others had attempted something which our government called treason, and which it punished with death. It therefore occasioned me considerable wonder that he should be placed under my charge; but more of this afterward.

He had, as I said, his wife hanging on his arm. She was as merry as a bird, she looked like a turtle dove cooing and nestling beneath his great wing.

Before we had passed over our heads, I looked upon them as my own children. Every morning I used to call them into my cabin. The young fellow would sit writing at my table, that is to say, at my desk, which was my bed. He would often help me at reckoning, and soon learned to do better than I could. I was amazed at his ability. His young wife would sit upon one of the round stools in my cabin, working at her needle.

One day, we were all three sitting in this way when I said:

"Do you know, my young ones, as it seems to me we make a very pretty family picture? Mind, I don't mean to ask questions, but may be you have not much money to spare, and you are, both of you, as I think, too handsome to dig in the burning sun of Cayenne. Like many a poor wretch before you. Its a bad country—a bad country, take my word for it. I, who have roughed it through tempest and sunshine till I have the skin of a rhinoceros, might get along there, but you—oh, I am afraid for you. So, if you should chance to have a bit of foolish friendship for your poor old captain, I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll get rid of this old bag; she's not much better than an old tub, after all, so I'll settle myself down there with you, if you like. You see I have not a living soul in the world to care for, or that that cares for me. I want relations, I want a home, I want a family. I should like to make a home with you; my pretty ones! What say ye?"

They said nothing at all, but sat looking first at each other then at me, as if they doubted whether they understood what I said.

At last the little bird threw her arms around my neck and cried like a baby.

"But," said she suddenly pausing, "you haven't looked at the letter with the big red seal."

"Hang it!" I exclaimed, "it had slipped my mind entirely."

With a cold, dreadful sensation I went to my chest to see where we were. I found that we had several days remaining before we should reach the proper longitude for opening the letter.

Well, there we stood, all three of us, looking up at the letter as if it could have spoken to us. As it happened the sun was shining full upon the face of the clock case, and fell upon the great staring red seal of the letter. I could not help fancying it looked something like a big monster, an ogre's face, grinning from the middle of the fire; that is, to make them laugh, "its great big eyes were staring out of its head!"

"Ah, my love," said the wife, "it looks like blood."

"Pooh, pooh!" said her husband, taking her arm under his, "it looks like a letter of invitation to a wedding. Come, come leave the letter alone if it troubles you. Let's go to our room and prepare for bed."

And off they went. They went upon deck and left me with that beast of a letter. I remember that I kept looking at

it as I smoked my pipe; it seemed to fix its great eye upon mine, fascinating like the eye of a serpent. It was red, wide, raw, staring like the maw of a fierce wolf. I took my great coat and hung it over both clock and letter and went out upon deck.

We were now in the vicinity of Cape Verde Islands—the *Belle* was running before a fair wind at the rate of ten miles an hour. It was a splendid tropical night, the stars large and shining; the moon rising above the horizon, as large as a sun of silver, the line of ocean parting it, and long streams of bare, shimmering light falling upon the waves, which, as they broke, sparkled like jewels. I sat upon the deck, smoking my pipe, and looking at them.

All was still except the soft fall of the officer of the watch, as he paced the deck, gauging, as I was, upon the shadow of the vessel, stealing over the silent water.

I love silence and order—I hate noise and confusion. The lights should all have been extinguished by this time; but when I looked upon the deck I thought I saw a little red hue light beneath my feet. At another time and place this would have made me angry; but knowing that the light came from the cabin of my little *deportos*, I determined to see what they were about.

I had only to look down—I could see into the cabin from the skylight.

The young girl was upon her knees, she was saying her prayers. A lamp swinging from the ceiling lighted her room. She had on a long white night dress, and her fair, golden hair floated over her shoulders, and almost touched two little bare feet which were peeping from under her white dress, so pretty. I turned away; but what! said I, I am an old sailor! What matters it? So I stayed.

The husband was sitting upon a little trunk, his head resting upon his hands looking at her as she prayed. She raised her face to heaven, and then I saw that her eyes were filled with tears. She looked like a Magdalene. As she rose he said:

"My sweet Laurette, as we approach America, I cannot help being anxious—I do not know why—but I feel that this voyage has been the happiest part of our lives."

"So it seems to me," she answered. "I only wish it would last forever."

Suddenly clasping his hands in a transport of love and affection, he said: "And yet, my little angel, I see you cry when you say your prayers, and that I cannot stand for I know what causes it, and then I fear you must repent what you have done."

"Repent said she, in a sad rebuking tone. Repent of having come with you. Do you think because I have been yours only such a very, very short time, that I should not love you? Was I not your wife? How can you be so sorry that I should be with you, to live if you live, and to die with you if you die?"

The young man began to sigh, striking the floor impatiently with his feet, while he kissed repeatedly the little hand and arm she was holding out.

"Ah, Laurette, Laurette! When I think if our marriage had been delayed five days that then I should have been arrested and transported alone, I cannot forgive myself."

At this the little one stretched out her round white arms, clasped his head, pressed his forehead, his hair, his eyes, smiling like a cherub, and murmuring all sorts of woman's fond things. I was quite affected, and consider it one of the prettiest scenes I ever witnessed.

"And besides, we are so very rich, too!" she said, bursting out laughing. "Look at my purse, one gold louis d'or—all my worldly wealth."

He began to laugh too.

"Yes, dear, I have spent my last half crown. I gave it to the fellow who carried our trunks on board."

"Ah, pooh!" cried she, "what matters it? Nobody so merry as those that have nothing at all; besides I have my two diamond rings that my mother gave me; they are good for something all the world over; we can sell them when you like; and besides, I am sure the captain meant kindly by us, and I suspect he knows very well what is in the letter. It is a recommendation to the Governor of Cayenne."

"Perhaps so; who knows?"

"To be sure it is, continued the charming little wife. "You are so good; I am sure the government has banished you only for a short time. I know they have no feeling against you."

It was high time the light should be struck out, and now I rapped on the deck and called to them to do so.

They instantly obeyed, and I heard them laughing and chattering like two innocent school-boys.

One morning when I awoke I was surprised not to feel the slightest motion of the vessel. Hurrying on deck I found that we were becalmed. Latitude, one degree North, longitude, between twenty-seven and twenty-eight degrees West.

I waited until night, when I descended to my cabin and opened the letter with a dull, awful feeling. I held my breath

while I broke the big red seal and read: "Captain Fontainebleau: The convict Antoine Hindesclaire, stands convicted of high treason against the Republic. The directory order that he be shot in mid-ocean, and you are hereby instructed to see that those orders are carried into effect."

I read the letter backward and forward. I went on deck. There they were, she looking upon the ocean and he gazing upon her with an expression of unutterable fondness. Catching his eye, I signed for him to come into the cabin, and bidding her good-by, he came down, his face all smiles.

I was bathed in a cold sweat; I felt as if deadly sick; I handed him the letter he read it, together with the death warrant, which was drawn up in due form and attached. I gathered voice as he finished.

He colored slightly and bowed.

"I ask nothing, captain," said he in the same gentle voice that always characterized his speech; no man can be expected to swear from his duty. I only wish to speak a few words to Laurette, and entrust you to take care of her if she survives—I hardly think she will."

"All is fair, my good fellow," I cried. "If you request it I will carry her back to France to her family. I will never leave her until she wishes to get rid of me, but I do not think she will survive it."

He took my hand and pressed it.

"Most kind captain I see you suffer more in this business than I do; but there is no help for it. I trust you will preserve what little property of mine is left, for her sake, and that you will take care she gets what her poor old mother may leave her. I put her life, her honor in your hands. She is (and how fondly low his voice became) a delicate little creature—her chest is often affected; she must keep it warm; and if she should keep the two diamond rings her mother gave her, I should be glad; but, of course, if money is needed they must go. My poor Laurette—how pretty she looks."

It was getting too much for me, and I began to knit my brows.

"One word is as good as a thousand," I said. "We understand each other. Go to her."

I squeezed his hand; he looked wistfully at me, and I added: "Stay a moment, let me give you a word of advice. Don't say a word to her; be easy; that is my business. It shall be managed in the best manner."

"Ah!" said he, "I did not understand; yes, much better. Besides, this leave-taking—this leave taking!"

"Yes," said I, "don't behave like a child—much better. No leave taking if you can help it, or you are lost."

I kept my seat. I saw them walking arm in arm upon the deck for about half an hour.

I called the mate to me, and when he had read the letter, I said:

"Garley, that is bad business—bad business. I put it in your hands. I obey the orders, but remain in the cabin until it is over."

"How do you wish the thing done?" he asked in nonchalant manner.

"Take him in a boat—out of sight do it as quick as possible; don't say anything of this until the time comes."

Garley sat five minutes looking at me without saying a word. He was a strange fellow. I didn't know what to make of him. He then went out of the cabin without saying a word.

Night came at last.

"Man a boat; go a quarter of a mile; be quick."

To obey a slip of paper; for it was but a slip of paper after all. Something in the very air must have urged me on. I saw the young man kneel down before his Laurette, kiss her knees, her feet, her gown! I cried like a madman.

"Part them! Part them this instant! Part them—curse the republic—curse the directory—the directors! I quit the service! Curse the lawyers! You may tell them if you will!"

She was dragged into her berth, and the boat rowed away in the darkness.

Sometimes after a dull volley came over the sea to the vessel. It was all over.

Fool, madman? How I paced the deck and cursed myself! All night long I paced back and forth, and all night long I heard the moaning of the poor stricken bird.

Often I halted and attempted to throw myself into the sea and so end this horrible torture of brain and heart.

Days passed; I saw nothing of Laurette. I would not see her. She avoided me, and I was glad of it. I could not bear the sight of that woe-stricken face. The mate, Garley, how I hated him! He was as cool and unconcerned as though he had no remembrance of shooting the poor wretch.

At Cayenne I resigned my ship. Going to the city I made my arrangements, and took the steamer for New York. I placed ample funds in the hands of a trusted friend, and told him to send Laurette to me at the end of six months. I could not see her until her grief had lost its edge.

And careless of my life, I sailed into New York State, and

finally bought a little place where I hoped I should lie down and die.

I sent for Laurette. Poor bird, I must see her. I could wait no longer.

One summer night I sat in the porch of my house, smoking my pipe, and gauging down the road, soon the rumble of a wheel was heard, and the stage halted.

The next moment a pair of soft arms was around my neck, and the head of my sobbing Laurette was on my bosom.

"Oh! you dear excellent captain!" "Heaven! who is that behind you?" There stood the manly form of Antoine Hindesclaire, the convict.

"What does this mean?" I demanded, hardly knowing whether I was dreaming or not.

"Are you glad to see me?" "Thank God! Thank God!" was all I could ejaculate.

I understood it all. The mate Garley had read my heart better than I did myself. After leaving the brig in the boat he arranged the whole affair. The volley was fired, but no bullet touched Antoine Hindesclaire. He was smuggled into his berth again, and took care to avoid my sight. The whole crew were in the plot, said, thank God, I was duped.

I sent Garley a thousand dollars as a reward.

I am now an old man, but I am happy. My children and grandchildren (I call them nothing else) seem to think old Captain Fontainebleau is not such a wretch after all.

**Southern Cotton Crops.**  
The cotton crop in North Alabama, as a general thing, is a lamentable failure, and from our Texas exchanges we learn that the Boll worm and Army worm are playing and havoc with the cotton crop in that section.

We learn from the *Pasadena* (Miss.) Messenger that the growth and development of cotton is slow, and the yield will probably fall far short of what was hoped for a few weeks ago. The worm is still working slowly, but not doing much damage.

The *Yazoo* (Miss.) Democrat says:—"The genuine cotton worm is undoubtedly at work, and we may look for a reduction of at least a fourth on original calculations."

Reports from all sections of Arkansas say that the present drought has injured the cotton crop at least one-third.

Planters from West Tennessee and North Mississippi state that drought is causing cotton to rust and shed, and unless they have a rain very soon late cotton will be an entire failure, and early planting will suffer seriously.

The following legend relates how a certain Grand Duke of Florence built a bridge without expense to the State: The Grand Duke issued a proclamation that every beggar who would appear in the Grand Plaza at a certain designated time, should be provided with a new suit of clothes free of cost. At the appointed hour all the beggars of the city assembled, whereupon the officers, caused each avenue of the public square to be closed and then compelled the beggars to strip off their old clothes, and gave each one, according to promise, a new suit. In the old clothes thus collected enough money was found concealed to build a beautiful bridge over the Arno, still called the Beggar's Bridge!

A curious horse case was recently tried in England. The purchaser of the horse in question brought an action against the seller for a breach of warranty, on the ground that while the horse was represented to be a "lier" was a horse accustomed to sleep while lying down, instead of when standing up. The verdict was in favor of the plaintiff, who received a considerable sum in damages. No reason was given why a horse that lies down to sleep should be considered to be worth more than one that sleeps on four; but, as most horses sleep standing, a "lier" must be considered an exceptional animal, rendered valuable by his peculiar habit.

Let no man be too proud to work. Let no one be ashamed of a hard hand or a sunburnt countenance. Let none be ashamed of poverty. Be ashamed of nothing that is honest, but glory in the sweat of your brow—that you are obeying the divine injunction. Labor is honorable, and he is not ashamed of it.

EVERY man, rich or poor, ought to have some great absorbing purpose, some active engagements in which his energies are devoted. Duty, daily duty, not enjoyment—must be the aim of each life. No man has a right to live upon the fair earth, to breathe its pure air, to consume its food, to enjoy its beauties, producing nothing in return.

VICE and laziness have everywhere their votaries, and the votaries of the "shabby footstep" are to be met with in all places. No human beings ever congregated into a community, without including among themselves the just and unjust, the wise and the ignorant, the evil and the good.

## N. Y. Day-Book on Blanton Duncan.

We gave up the advocacy of the Louisville Convention because we lost all hope in its success. We felt that the sacred principles for which we have so long, so faithfully contended could not afford to be tinkered and experimented with by adventurers, or by mere dreamers. Two things we discovered about the individual who assumed almost the entire management of the Louisville Convention.

First, he may almost literally be said to be self-appointed to the role he is playing, and we discovered that he utterly disregarded the counsel of some of the wisest, truest and firmest friends of our cause—men, indeed, who have a national reputation as gentlemen of great intellect and unsuspected honor. The advice of these well-tried veterans and sagacious politicians was treated with contempt.

This was the first blow to our faith in the success of the proposed convention. We felt that the cause was too great and too sacred to become a prey to a mere adventurous desire for notoriety. Secondly, we discovered that the antecedents of the individual who insisted on his own individuality in everything, were such as not to inspire the confidence of true Democrats.

A man who did from the bitterest type of Whigs into the most violent abys of Know-Nothingism, is certainly not the most hopeful prop to pure Democracy, without which the movement against the Cincinnati platform and nominees is a mere farce. We know that nothing but the affirmation of the purest Jeffersonian Democracy would be accepted by that large and most respectable class of Democrats who reject the Cincinnati platform which the Baltimore Convention unwisely accepted. But we discovered that the gentleman whose self-assumption had made him the apparent architect of the fortunes of the proposed new convention knew nothing of the true principles of Democracy, and had no comprehension whatever of the vast and important movement.

**Boys and Girls.**  
In the United States there are 19,500,000 men and boys, and 19,000,000 women and girls. There is an excess of males 24 per cent. a far different showing for the whole country from that in New England, where the females are considerably more numerous than the males. It would seem, therefore, that the maidens among us have overwhelming opportunities of marriage; yet it is a singular fact that more men than women of the same generation enter wedlock. The "marriageable age" of a hearty bachelor extends indefinitely from twenty to fifty; that of a virgin is usually limited to twenty.

To be neglected to make love at a fair chance to win a man who was actually unborn to have a married world.

A QUAIN Scotch minister was given somewhat to exaggerating in the pulpit. His clerk reminded him of its ill effects upon the congregation. He replied that he was not aware of it, to give him a cough by way of a hint. Soon after he was describing Sampson's tying the foxes' tails together. He said: "The foxes in those days were much larger than ours, and they had tails twenty feet long!"

"Ahem!" came from the clerk's desk. "That is," continued the preacher, "according to their measurement; but by ours they were fifteen feet long."

"Ahem!" louder than ever before. "But, as you may think this is extraordinary, we'll just say they were ten feet long."

"Ahem!" still more vigorously. The parson leaned over the pulpit, and, shaking his finger at the clerk, said: "You may cough there all night long, now; I'll not take off a fur more. Would ye have the foxes wid nae tails at all?"

PERHAPS the most remarkable engineering feat now in progress is the crossing of the Andes by the Lima and Oroya railroad. On this road the mountain chain will be crossed at an altitude of fifteen thousand feet by a tunnel three thousand feet in length, and amid perpetual snow. The work is being accomplished by the Cholos Indians, they being the only workmen who can endure the rarity of the atmosphere at this elevation for a prolonged period. The gradient is the steepest known on an ordinary railway. The value of the road will lie in the fact of its developing the mineral wealth stored in these mountains. The silver mines are especially rich, and coal has been discovered, and will be of incalculable wealth in a land where fuel is so scarce.

THE immense sum of \$27,500,000 has been expended every year on French follies and knick-knacks during the past eight years by Americans. We believe it is time to stop this nonsense. Turn that capacious sum in the direction of American industrial pursuits, and there could be little talk about depleted manufacturing interests.

AFTER a long siege Flemingburg is at last free of small-pox.

## Statistics of Marriage—Hints for the Ladies.

If we take 100 to represent the whole of a woman's chances of marriage between the ages of 15 and 70, the proportional chances in each period of five years will be as follows:

Age	Chances of Marriage
15 and under 20	25
20 and under 25	25
25 and under 30	25
30 and under 35	25
35 and under 40	25
40 and under 45	25
45 and under 50	25
50 and under 55	25
55 and under 60	25
60 and under 65	25
65 and under 70	25

From this it appears:—1. That one-seventh part of the females who marry in England are married between the ages of 15 and 20, or one-seventh part of a woman's chances of marriage lies between those years. 2. That fully one-half of all the women who marry are married between 20 and 25, or one-half of a woman's chances are comprised within these five years. 3. That between 15 and 25, precisely two-thirds of a woman's chances of marriage are exhausted, and only one-third remains for the rest of her life up to 70. 4. That at 30 no less than 85 chances out of the 100 are gone, and 15, or about one-seventh, only remain. She has strong reason now for improving her time. 5. At 35, a fraction, a tenth, is all that remains to her, which is reduced to a twentieth at 40. 6. At 45 her chances of marriage have sunk to one-fortieth, and at 50, to one-hundredth. At 60 there is still a glimmering of hope, for it appears that among females about one marriage in 1,000 takes place at and beyond this age. The number of women married between 15 and 20 is six times greater than the number of men. The number of men and women married between 20 and 25 is very nearly equal; but the number of men married at all higher ages is greater than the number of women.

**Roman Customs.**  
Roman men usually went bareheaded, and it was thought to be a mark of effeminacy to wear a hat; as a protection against bad weather they covered themselves with the upper folds of the toga. But the Roman women indulged in every costly head-dress, among which we find one that proves that there is nothing new under the sun, not even the present style of bonnets. The world certainly moves in a circle.

**Good Chance.**  
We are now offering

plause will put no more power, energy, and zeal into his work than is just sufficient to produce the desired reward. The laborer will relax his force or shorten his time, if possible, the manufacturer will use inferior materials, the author and orator will cater to the taste of his patron rather than enforce unpalatable truths, and a politician will serve his party rather than his country's best welfare. But could they be imbued with the higher aim of real usefulness to mankind, and of making their work a means of good in itself, then enthusiasm will clothe the arm with new vigor, and inspire the mind to nobler efforts. Whatever the vocation may be, if the aim is to perform its duties in the best manner, if a sincere desire exists for the perfection of the work apart from its rewards, then a tendency toward completeness is established and the basis of thoroughness is laid.

**Philadelphia Ledger.**  
When you meet old people who are sick, do your best to make them comfortable. The London Era says: "Miss Edith Challis, a well known actress in London and New York, while traveling some months since, was very attentive to an old lady, who fell ill on the journey and subsequently died. Last week Miss Challis was greatly astonished at receiving a letter from her executors, to the effect that the kindness shown to the old lady had resulted in her being remembered in her will to the extent of a clear two thousand a year for life. In consequence of this she retires from the stage."

A LAWYER and a parson were talking about which way the wind was. The farmer said: "We go by the courthouse vane." "And we," replied the parson, "go by the church vane." "Well," said the lawyer "in the matter of wind, that is the best authority," and the parson went to cogitate.

Aldebaron, once so famous on the turf, has been purchased by Maggie Mitchell, and is used by her exclusively as a saddle-horse at Long Branch. He is now twelve years old, and looking remarkably fine.

HON. CAMERON M. CLAY is announced for a series of speeches in Ohio from the 18th to the 17th of September.

THE members of the historical Lincoln Cabinet, whose names are inseparably connected with the greatest events of his administration, were Wm. H. Seward, Secretary of State; Salmon P. Chase, Secretary of the Treasury; Edwin M. Stanton, Secretary of War; Gen. Wm. Wells, Secretary of the Navy; Gen. B. Smith, Secretary of the Interior; Montgomery Blair, Post-master-General; and Edward Bates, Attorney General. Of these, Messrs. Stanton, Smith, and Bates are dead. Mr. Seward takes no part in the canvass. All the rest, Chase, Wells, and Blair, heartily and vigorously support the candidacy of Greeley and Brown.

"THAT MAN," said a wag, "came to Nashua forty years ago, purchased a basket and commenced gathering rags. How much do you suppose he is worth now?" It was a conundrum we could not answer. "Nothing," he continued, after a pause, "and he owes for the basket."

EX-POSTMASTER-GENERAL KING, of Maine, who supported Grant in 1868, announces that the last four years experience has satisfied him that we have the wrong man at the head of the government. He desires that Mr. Greeley shall be Mr. Grant's successor.

## OLD MAIDS.

The Philosophy of the Subject.  
A writer in Blackwood handles this venerable but perennial subject mercifully. He says: No woman without a certain independence and force of character is fit to be an old maid. There are feeble women who might make possible wives, but who make depl